Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 02542 021037Z

16
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07

FMC-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 CG-00 OFA-01 DLOS-05 L-02 /037 W
---------- 068159
P 020830Z APR 75
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8138

UNCLAS ATHENS 2542

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CGEN: US FLAG PLEASURE VESSELS
SUBJECT: INSPECTION OF US FLAG PLEASURE VESSELS BY GREEK AUTHORITIES

1. U.S. FLAG PLEASURE VESSELS USED FOR CHARTER PURPOSES IN GREEK WATERS ARE REQUIRED TO BE INSPECTED BY GREEK MERCHANT MARINE INSPECTION SERVICE UNDER TERMS OF GREEK PRESIDENTIAL DECREE 325 PUBLISHED ON SEPTEMBER 28, 1973. DECREE STATES THAT PROFESSIONAL TOURIST VESSELS UNDER FOREIGN FLAG WHICH ACCEPT PASSENGERS AT GREEK PORTS MUST COMPLY WITH PROVISIONS OF GREEK SAFETY REGULATIONS IRRESPECTIVE OF WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE PROVIDED WITH A CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY THE COUNTRY OF THE FLAG THEY CARRY.

2. GREEK MINISTER OF THE MERCHANT MARINE IS WILLING TO INSPECT SUCH VESSELS AT OWNER'S REQUEST. EMBASSY SEES NO OBJECTION TO SUCH INSPECTIONS AND SO INFORMED MINISTRY BY LETTER LAST YEAR. NOW, HOWEVER, LOCAL HARBOR MASTERS ARE REQUESTING A SPECIFIC EMBASSY AUTHORIZATION FOR EACH VESSEL, CITING REGULATION 13 OF INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE SAFETY LIFE AT SEA AS THEIR AUTHORITY. WITH HUNDREDS OF SUCH VESSELS IN GREECE, ISSUANCE OF INDIVIDUAL LETTERS OF AUTHORIZATION COULD BECOME BURDENSOME.
FYI: MOST SUCH VESSELS CARRY LESS THAN 12 PASSENGERS AND THUS WOULD NOT QUALIFY FOR A PASSENGER SHIP SAFETY CERTIFICATE (FORM CG HQ-968). THE INSPECTION FOR AND ISSUANCE OF THE GREEK EQUIVALENT OF THIS CERTIFICATE PRESUMABLY WOULD REQUIRE THE
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PAGE 02 ATHENS 02542 021037Z

EMBASSY'S WRITTEN CONCURRENCE, UNDER REGULATION 13.

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

3. EMBASSY SUGGESTED THAT OWNERS HAVE YACHTS INSPECTED BY PRIVATE SURVEYORS BASED ON US COAST GUARD REQUIREMENTS, WHOSE REPORTS WOULD BE USED AS BASIS FOR EMBASSY LETTERS CONFIRMING VESSEL MET SAFETY STANDARDS. GREEK MERCHANT MARINE REFUSED TO ACCEPT SUCH A PROCEDURE, HOWEVER.

4. THE DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE IS REQUESTED.
SPECIFICALLY, SHOULD EMBASSY ISSUE A NEW STATEMENT TO GREEK MERCHANT MARINE INSPECTION SERVICE THAT THE USG HAS NO OBJECTION TO INSPECTIONS OF CHARTER VESSELS, BUT REFUSE TO ISSUE INDIVIDUAL AUTHORIZATIONS? OR SHOULD EMBASSY PROVIDE INDIVIDUAL LETTERS FOR EACH VESSEL AUTHORIZING INSPECTION UNDER TERMS OF 7 FAM 524.6-5? CAN THE DEPARTMENT SUGGEST ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE?

5. FYI: FRENCH EMBASSY IS ISSUING LETTERS TO CHARTER YACHT OWNERS AUTHORIZING INSPECTION IF OWNER CONCURS.
GERMAN EMBASSY, ALTHOUGH REQUESTED, HAS SO FAR REFUSED TO ISSUE SUCH LETTERS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ATHENS02542
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750113-0907
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750491/aaaadexa.tel
Line Count: 81
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 JUN 2003 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <08 JAN 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INSPECTION OF US FLAG PLEASURE VESSELS BY GREEK AUTHORITIES
TAGS: CGEN, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006